

IACH. The crickets sing, and man's
o'er-labour'd
sense

Repairs itself by rest: Our Tarquin⁷ thus
Did softly press the rushes⁸, ere he
waken'd The chastity he wounded.—
Cytherea, How bravely thou becom'st thy
bed ! fresh lily⁹!

* Restrain in me the cursed thoughts, that nature
" Gives way to in repose ! " STEEVENS. 7—OUR
Tarquin—] The speaker is an Italian,
JOHNSON. ^s — Tarquin thus

Did SOFTLY press the RUSHES,] This shows that
Shakspeare's idea was, that the *ravishing strides* of
Tarquin were *softly* ones, and may serve as a
comment on that passage in Macbeth, See vol. xi.
p. 98, n. 9. BLACKSTONE.

« — the *rushes* " It was the custom in
the time of our author to strew
chambers with rushes, as we now
cover them with carpets ; the practice
is mentioned in Caius de Ephemera Bri-
tannica. JOHNSON.

So, in Thomas Newton's Herball to the Bible,
Svo. 1587: " Sedge and *rushes*,—with the which
many in this country do use In sommer time to
strawe their parlors and churches, as well for
coolenes as for pleasant smell."

Again, in Arden of Feversham, 1592:

«• - - his blood remains.

" Why strew *rushes*."

Again, in Bussy d'Ambois,
1607 :

^{6*} Were not the king here, he should strew the
chamber like a *rush*."

Shakspeare has the same circumstance in his

Rape of Lucrece:

" by the light he spies

^{*e} Lucretia's glove wherein her needle sticks ; " He
takes it from the *rushes* where it lies," &c. The
ancient English stage also, as appears from more
than one passage in Decker's Gul's Hornbook,
1609, was strewn with *rushes* ; " Salute all your
gentle acquaintance that are sprecl either on the
rushes or on stooles about you, and drawe what
troope you can from the *stage* after you."

STEEVENS-

9-----Cytherea,

How bravely thou becom'st thy bed! fresh lily !
And WHITER THAN THE SHEETS !] So, in
our author's Venus and Adonis:

" Who sees his true love in her naked
bed, " *Teaching the sheets a whiter hue
than white*."